

En Sabah Nur, the lord Apocalypse. Harbinger of destruction and overseer of a vast empire. An ancient and powerful mutant who ensures the survival of the fittest. In this, the Age of Apocalypse, only the strong survive. The weak are forgotten and left to die with no place in this cruel, new world.

In his arcane files, Apocalypse separates the wheat from the chaff—calculating those who are chosen. And now, someone has breached those files on a desperate quest to discover if he himself is chosen or forgotten.

THE AGE OF APOCALYPSE: THE CHOSEN



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X-MEN



A place that was
once called
NEW YORK CITY...

...the provenance
of an ever
changing world.

For here sits the fortress of
En Sabah Nur, home of the
ancient and powerful mutant
known to the world as...

APOCALYPSE

From this place, he
carries forth nothing
less than cleansing the
earth's gene pool.

"SURVIVAL OF
THE FITTEST".

These are the words by
which Apocalypse lives...

...and by which he will see
the human race **DIE**.

Apocalypse seeks
fulfillment of the
genetic destiny
for mutantkind...

...and thus they,
too, are subject
to his scrutiny.

Even those closest
to the High Lord
know that they may not
survive the final culling.

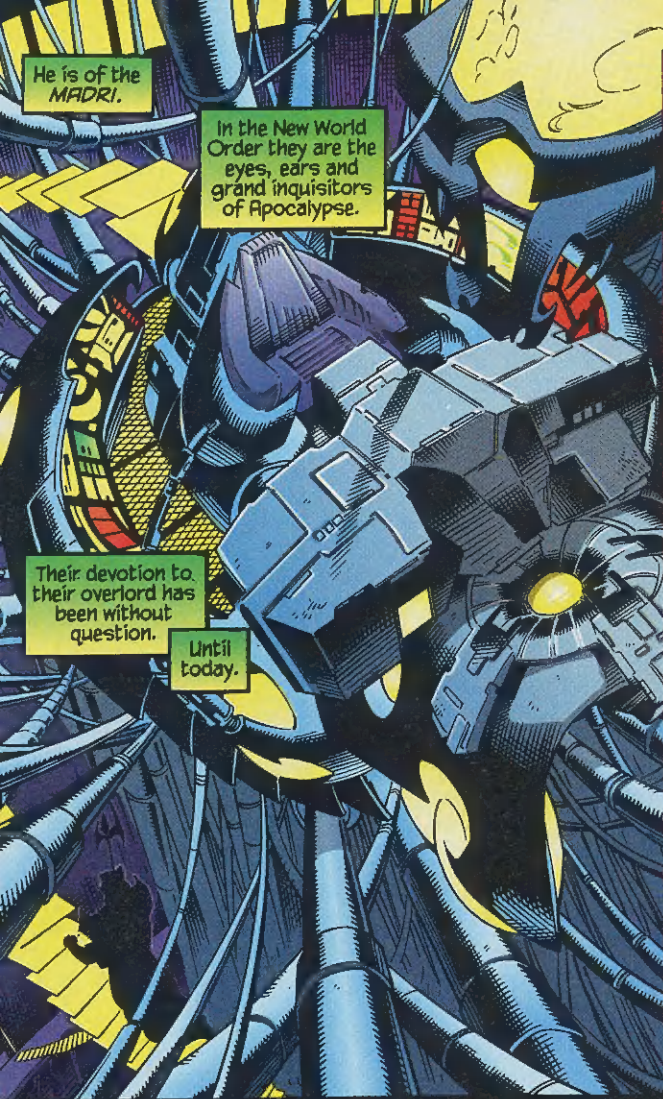
Most accept this
as a fact of life
in this age of
Apocalypse...

...and perform
their duties
without question.

DO NOT ENTER

For others, the
need to know
their final fate...

...supercedes
all loyalty.




He is of the
MADRI.

In the New World
Order they are the
eyes, ears and
grand inquisitors
of Apocalypse.

Their devotion to
their overlord has
been without
question.

Until
today.



Only the Madri could
move through the inner-
most corridors of the
fortress without being
questioned.

Only the Madri would
enter Apocalypse's
innermost sanctum.

But only one of the Madri
would dare access his
most classified data...



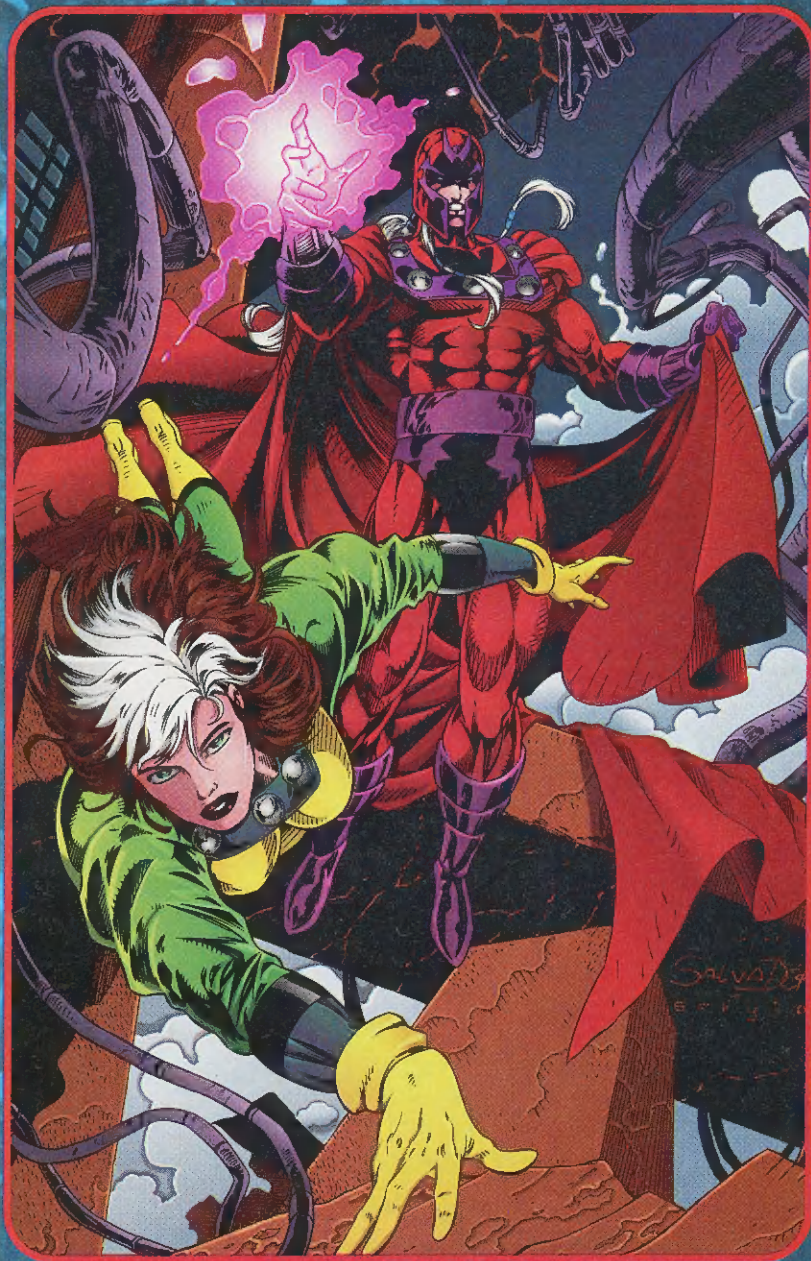
...and sift through the
many profiles Apocalypse
has created.

For his need to
know his own fate is
all encompassing.

Is he the
chosen...



...or is he
forgotten?

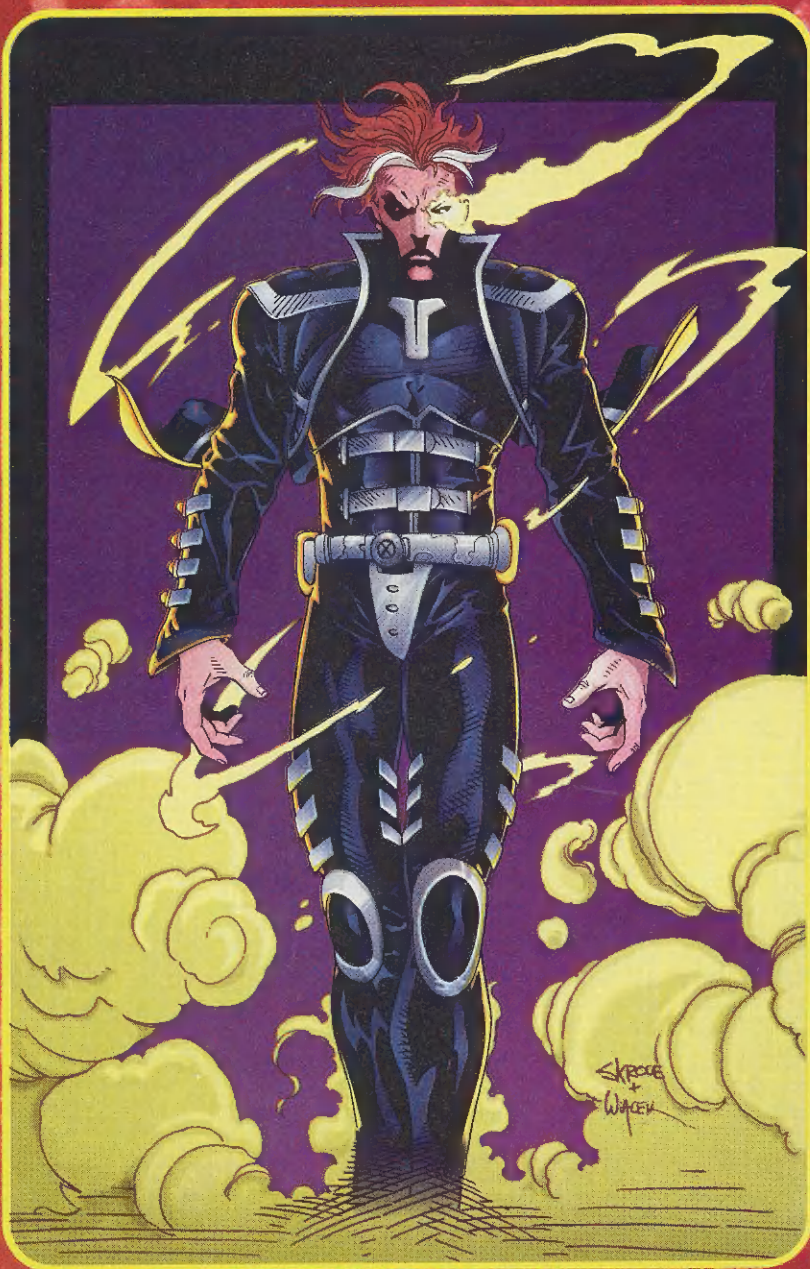


MAGNETO & ROGUE

Once I believed Magneto and I would work together in the name of mutant destiny and mutant rule. He, too, saw the futility of entrusting the future of this planet to the genetically crippled. I know he believed that the gift of power granted us at birth was the only means of our survival. But he became soft... followed the dream of another... sought out comfort in the undying love of Rogue. Together, they have become the nurturing father and mother to the mutant rebellion against my sovereign rule.

Now we find ourselves facing each other from opposite sides of a chessboard, each scrambling to gather up pawns to use against the other. My players are multitudinous and his are few, and yet the rebellion rages on. In the end Magneto and I are destined to face one another. There shall be only one survivor.

FORGETTEN



X-MAN

What a wonder of genetic perfection Sinister has created in this, the summation of the work he has been conducting in my name. He has chosen the perfect amalgamation of mutant DNA to create the most powerful being this world has ever known.

Then why would my loyal vassal deem it fit to create this X-Man in the secrecy of his laboratories? Could it be that this genetic progeny of Jean Grey and Scott Summers, this man child with unparalleled potential for strength, is to be my assassin?

Still, he is more child than man— rash in his actions and unsure of his great powers. It will not be without some regret that I destroy this one.



CYCLOPS

The favorite adopted son of Sinister. Scott Summers has been pampered from the first day his mutant gift appeared. He was reared by Sinister to be a leader... and that he is. Commander of an elite mutant force as well as the overseer of the breeding pens; Summers serves Sinister, in my name, with uncompromising loyalty. Or does he?

I sense in him a compassion toward the prisoners in his charge which I find most distressing for one I see as a future Horseman. There have been escapes from the pens...and while that is to be expected... I have doubts about this one. Doubts which will only be put to rest by carefully observing his every move. Only then will I be assured that his loyalty is not to the one who has raised him, or to the genetically deficient that surround him, but to the one who has let him live...me.



HAVOK

Everything about this one indicates that his potential is as great as, if not greater than, his brother Scott Summers. Instead, Alex allows envy to rule his emotions... hatred to govern his heart... and shows no restraint in the use of his powers. He seeks absolute approval from all quarters in order to escape the shadow of his older and more respected brother...and receives little, especially from his own kinsmen. This drives him to lord it over the pens with a ruthlessness with which he directs at all the prisoners. And yet... there are rumors... most ironic indeed... that he has become enamored of one of the flatscans. He seeks to conceal it from all quarters and thus hides it from none.

Ultimately the passion and hatred which drive him... will be his undoing.





SINISTER

For one hundred and fifty years, Nathaniel Essex has been my most loyal and trustworthy servant I have given the keys to my kingdom... the genetic reserves of an entire planet—to him. He has been charged with rebuilding the world in my image. Daring to create the next generation of Homo Superior. Doomed to betray me. How could it be any other way? To him, this duty was nothing more than an elaborate laboratory experiment. He was content as long as the experiment continued and he was left alone to manipulate the evolutionary process. But now that it is time to separate the chaff from the wheat, I find he has become to much the father of his own experiments— a father to children who , if they survive, are doomed to be orphaned.





STORM

How can one once worshipped as an African Goddess concern herself with the fate of mere mortals? This one has ridden the winds and called down thunder and lightning to do her bidding, and yet, now she hides amongst the rest of Magneto's outcasts. Is it her love for Quicksilver, Magneto's son, that continues to fuel her need to be pitted against me?

How can she deny the truth? The truth that she has lived... We are the gods of this world and will ever be so.



QUICKSILVER

Not even his mutant gift of speed will allow Magneto's first born to run from the past which has hounded his family through the years. Though he does try.

He races into battle as the ever aggressive field leader of his father's rebel forces. Still, he cannot keep ahead of the haunting memories of his own past. His mother's death, his sister's murder, and the years spent in isolation for being what he is... a mutant. Yet, he still finds the courage to love another. If the African Goddess, Storm were to perish in battle as well, would it slow his pace?

The time will come when the son will be called upon to make a choice. Will he blindly run down the path his deluded father has laid out before him? Or will he choose the course which leads to survival... which leads to me?



NORTHSTAR/AURORA

These two siblings represent ~~as~~ much that is right with homo superior. With genetic gifts which ~~are~~ surpassed by few they immediately rose to the top of the mutant elite. They carry out orders with an eager compliance and total dedication to my vision.

And yet, they have become too taken with themselves and with their gifts. I see in them something more than self-assurance. I see a headiness which will only lead them to be two of the first to fall.



BEAST

Once Henry McCoy was a brilliant, and depraved, geneticist who insisted on experimenting on himself to accelerate his own mutations. Now, he is one of the most useful and frustrating of Sinister's lot. But in him I see the potential to exceed Sinister.

To Sinister, science is an art...carefully planned out through the years. But to McCoy, playing with the genetic make-up of mutant and human alike is all a game. He freely dips into the genetic soup within Sinister's pens and manipulates them to his own twisted vision of life. All is done with a distinct, and admirable, lack of morality or concern for the pain and suffering of his test subjects.

He is both gifted and savage at the same time. Because of that, he may become a hindrance with his compulsion for perverting the genetic matrix.

If only I could separate the brain from this man and utilize it to its fullest capacity...Perhaps I can?



FOUR HORSEMEN

The vanguard of my army of tomorrow. These four preside over all that is presently under my dominion and together helped expurgate my empire of the genetically destitute.

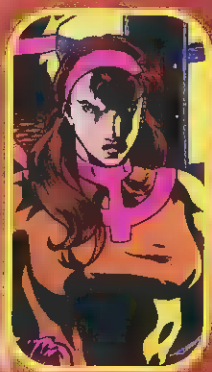
Each of these, the most powerful of the genetically gifted, believes I trust them over all others. But I do not. I seek only to use their great abilities to cultivate the power struggles which have arisen amongst them... to weed out the weak even amongst the strongest... to have them deliver the final strike against the flatscans which scurry about this planet. A blow so decisive that the weak race which inhabits this planet will be no more.

And from the ruins we will rise and bring with us the genetically worthy... the survivors... onward to the next step of evolution and a stronger world. A world ruled by me.



X-CALIBRE

Cowards. Barely worth an entry in these archives. This craven group of mutants have become legends amongst the human survivors of the cullings. Isolating themselves from the Great Conflict they refuse to join neither my forces nor the rebellion against me. Instead they operate the Infernal Gallop to the secret refuge they call AVALON. Here they provide sanctuary for the flatscans and attempt to create a community where humans and mutants can live in harmony. Blind fools and dreamers and all. The day is coming when they will learn that hiding is impossible.



HUMAN HIGH COUNCIL

The fittest that this soon to be forgotten race of genetically deficient beings has to offer.

Presiding over the teeming masses of humanity that huddle together on the European continent, each of these humans is survivors in his or her own limited way. They toll on in vain, battling against the tide of my power, seeking to preserve the fate of their doomed civilization... seeking to give hope to the multitudes of genetic inferiors who trust them to keep them safe from my iron fist. But they hope, and trust, in vain. For even if these inferior beings were somehow to succeed...if they were able to destroy me... I would, through the vision I adhere to, be victorious.



WEAPON-X & JEAN GREY

These two mutant lovers are loyal to no one but themselves.

Jean Grey, an exquisite example of genetic perfection, was once a dutiful follower of Magneto's dream.... until she was abandoned in battle and fell into the hands of my own forces. She was well on the way to becoming one of the mutant ruling class when the man/beast Weapon-X rebelled against Magneto's command decision, risked his own life and sacrificed a part of himself to rescue her from a situation that perhaps, she did not wish to be rescued.

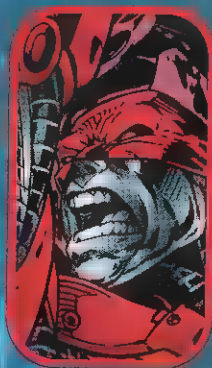
Weapon-X has allowed his savage nature to be lorded over by the passion he feels for this woman. Together they see themselves as soulmates. They believe they need no one else to survive these tumultuous times. Only they are blind to the absurdity, the tragedy, of their situation.

FORGOTTEN



GAMBIT & the EXTERNALS

This man leads his own band of outsiders in pitiful raids against me and those loyal to my vision. They emerge from the network of tunnels beneath my own city to filch from those who thrive under my rule and turn the stolen goods over to the human canaille. Gambit fancies himself the heroic outsider as he makes the humans believe they can triumph over the inevitable. He gives them faith in the underdog. Faith is ■ very dangerous thing. Gambit and his troupe are more irritating than dangerous... barely worthy of my attentions... except from one... one whining jewel amongst this mutant rabble... Lila Cheney. The mutant teleporter with power enough to transport me, and my vision, to the very stars. I will not allow ■ thief to keep this treasure from me.



COLLOSSUS

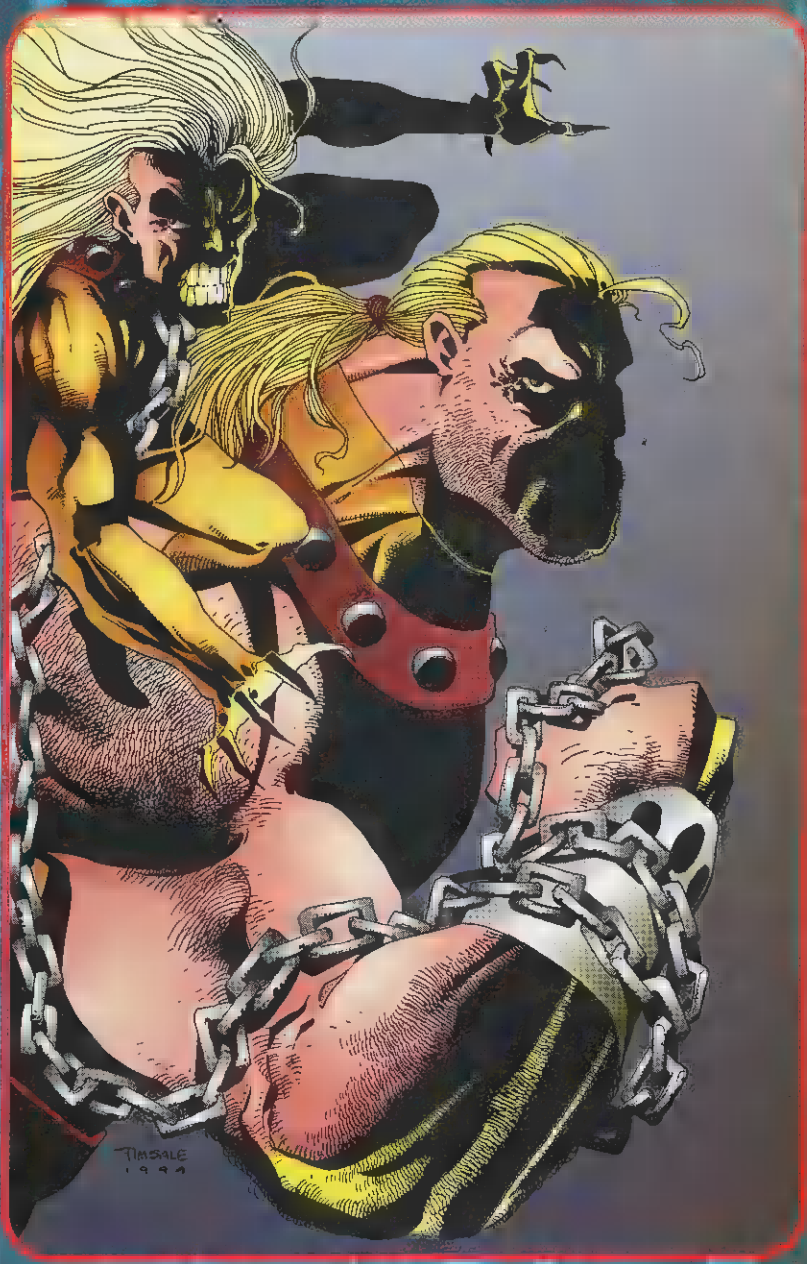
Peter Rasputin has been one of Magneto's misguided followers since the early days of the mutant rebellion against my rule. First, as a student at Magneto's now lifeless school on Wundagore Mountain... then as a warrior/hero who carried Magneto's message back to his own country... and now, along with his wife Katherine Pryde, he serves as the mentor to the new breed of mutant rebels.

The years have taken a toll on the heart of this young mutant until it is as hard as the organic steel which serves as his flesh. His family has been all but destroyed by the deaths of his parents and the betrayal of his brother, Mikhail, one of my own Horsemen. Collossus's emotional attachment to his young charges is close to nil. Which could be due to their inability to help him free his last living relative, his younger sister Iliyana, from my breeding pens. He has developed the fatalist attitude of kill or be killed... how close his philosophy is to my own. I see hope in this one.



ANGEL

The time is coming when will this one come down from his lofty perch. Even a mutant blessed with the gift of flight cannot remain aloft forever. How long does he think I can turn a blind eye to the business conducted at his establishment? Mutant and human mingle side by side... rebels and traitors imbibe his liquor. I am not receiving just compensation from this one. And yet how can I deny that this Alpha is a true survivor? Come what may, I believe that Mr. Warren Worthington III will rise to the top of whatever heap he is thrown into.



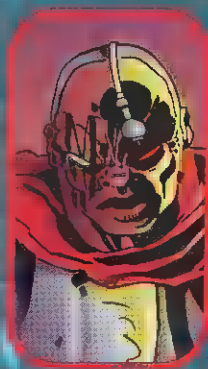
SABRETOOTH & WILDCHILD

Two mindless savages who have found comfort in the company of each other. The tearing of flesh and the gnawing of bone... these things fill their dreams.

Sabretooth was once one of mine. He served me willingly as he now does Magneto. Then, in a moment of compassion for the humans, he betrayed me. Then he had the audacity to crawl to me, bloody and broken, and ask for my helping and forgiving hand.

The years have proven Creed a survivor. Today he fights in the name of Magneto's rebellion and protects the human cattle he once would have willingly slaughtered in my name. I must wonder if his once fearsome bloodlust has been dulled by the symbiotic bond he has formed with the one called Wildchild.

Still, though he has taken up the cause of the rebels. Creed, like all others, will learn that there is only one true tenet... Only the fittest will survive. The day is coming when I will welcome Sabretooth back to my fold.



BISHOP

Madman? Or truly a mutant who has become unstuck in time? A man of mystery who upsets all the players and pawns which I have carefully maneuvered on my chessboard. He claims to be from another world... a timeline like our own, but one in which the man called Charles Xavier lived instead of perished. Now he seeks to change the past and disrupt the now. His is a world I would know, for if his words are true, I am victorious in all futures. Only the timing is different... and time is something I can always spare.



CHARLES XAVIER

It is a misnomer to classify this one as forgotten. A man who lived and dreamed a life of peace. A powerful mutant who died before his powers, or his dreams, could be realized. Dreams of a world in which mutant and human could live in harmony.

Why is it that death was not the end of this one? He was unfit to survive in my new world order and should be forgotten. Instead, the dreams of this dead man have given rise to the mutant rebellion I must face every day.

How differently would things have turned out had this one lived? I can only wonder.

Journal Entry:
THE MADRI

CHOSEN

THANK
THE LORD
APOCALYPSE...
THE MADRI ARE
CHOSEN.

WE
SHALL SERVE
HIM UNTO THE
END.

YOUR
WORDS ARE
TRUE,
MADRI.

BUT
THERE ARE
LESSONS TO BE
LEARNED HERE
TODAY.

CHOSEN

IN THIS
AGE IT IS THE HAND
OF APOCALYPSE
THAT DECIDES WHO IS
CHOSEN AND WHO IS
FORGOTTEN.

LORD,
I --!

FORGOTTEN!

AND YOU,
MADRI...

... ARE NOW
FORGOTTEN.

The priest's cry echoes
throughout the citadel...

...and all who hear it know,
once more, the price of
Apocalypse's displeasure.

The price
is death.

END



- Pages 1,2,31 - Ian Churchill/ Scott Hanna
- Magneto/ Rogue - Salvador Larroca/ Sergio Melia
- X-Man - Steve Skroce/ Bob Wiacek
- Cyclops - Salvador Larroca/ Sergio Melia
- Havok - Ian Churchill/ Karl Kesel
- Mr. Sinister - Ian Churchill/ Karl Kesel
- Storm - Salvador Larroca/ Sergio Melia
- Quicksilver - Ian Churchill/ Terry Austin
- Northstar/ Aurora - Ian Churchill/ James Pascoe
- The Beast - Ian Churchill/ Terry Austin
- The Four Horsemen - Val Semeiks/ Bob Wiacek
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- The Human High Council - Salvador Larroca/ Sergio Melia
- Weapon X - Ian Churchill/ James Pascoe
- X-Ternals - Ian Churchill/ Scott Hanna
- Colossus - Salvador Larroca/ Sergio Melia
- Angel - Salvador Larroca/ Sergio Melia
- Sabretooth/ Wildchild - Tim Sale
- Bishop - Tim Sale
- Charles Xavier - Tom Lyle/ Dan Panosian

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X-FACTS

FEBRUARY 1995

REALITY CHECKED

Seems as if some radical alterations have been made to the X-Men's continuity, doesn't it? Yes, sure, there sure have! So, for anyone who's feeling a bit out of the loop, here's a quick lesson to bring you up to speed on what's been happening to everyone's favorite genetic anomalies...



introduced us to a dark, ling, nightmare world bereft of the optimism of Xavier's dream and activities on behalf of both human and mutantkind. The Darwinism-driven Apocalypse made a play for global power sooner than he ever did in our reality, and without a well-organized team of X-Men to stop him, he managed to assume control of North America while wiping out a sizable portion of civilization in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres in the process. As a result, the United States has become Apocalypse's stronghold and a kingdom dominated by mutants. Sectioned off into five distinct territories, Apocalypse's devious vassals — *Sinister*, *Holocaust*, *Abyss* and *Mikhail Rasputin* — rule their respective lands with iron fists in the name of their dread lord and master.

Scattered pockets of human settlements still exist in North America, but the majority of the survivors of the genetic cullings which continue to sweep throughout the continent have fled for their lives to the shores of Europe, where the Eurasian High Council conducts its intercontinental terrorist counter-strike activities against Apocalypse.

With the battle lines so divisively drawn between humans and mutants in this reality, one might think that there wouldn't be a shred of opposition to these fortes so intent upon the other's destruction. Ah, but that is most definitely not the case here! For even though Charles Xavier no longer exists in this

reality, his influence lives on in the heart and mind of his closest — and not to mention most powerful! — friend, the mutant master of magnetism... *Magneto*!

However...in the Age Of Apocalypse, Cyclops and Havok are the charges of none other than the diabolical geneticist known as *Sinister*! Believe it or not, these two heroes aren't fighting for Xavier's dream! When they're not at each other's throats, these savage siblings are two of the most important instruments of Apocalypse's terrifying nightmare!

And that's one of the reasons why you may have noticed a one-handed, adamantium-clawed *Weapon X* and a short-haired, tattoo-faced *Jean Grey* fighting side-by-side and indulging in an occasional little smoocheroonie here and there. That's right, the unrequited lovers in our universe are quite requited in this one!

Furthermore, *Dr. Moira MacLaggert* has turned her back on the cause of mutants! Not only is she married to industrialist and Sentinel-creator, *Bolivar Trask*, but she is also the head of the Eurasian High Council and a major proponent of their planned eradication of mutantkind!

Or howabout this little tidbit of info... *Sabretooth's an X-Man*! You're probably asking yourself, "Have they gone insane!?" Well, we here at the X-Office may not have, but the world that these heroes are trying to survive in sure has.

And if that doesn't sound loopy enough, check this one out...*Rogue and Magneto are married!* And they have a son!

Obviously, you're finding this a little hard to believe, but trust us when we say that you can stop beating yourselves up trying to figure out "How could Rogue have children!?" or desperately hoping to come up with some scenario that could once and for all explain "Whatever happened between Rogue and Gambit!?"

It's making y'all crazy, ain't it? You're just dying to know the answers, right? Well, all we ask is that you just sit tight, be patient and try not to get in the way, 'cuz if the X-Men don't defeat Apocalypse, prevent the Human High Council from unleashing nuclear armageddon, travel back in time to save Professor X and halt the M'Kraan Crystal's destructive wave before it reaches this last bastion of reality in **X-MEN: OMEGA**, then you might never learn the answers!

THE WISH LIST

ASTONISHING X-MEN #2: The X-Men take on Apocalypse's forces head-on as they try to prevent a massive genetic culling in Chicago! Plus, the maniacal menace of Apocalypse's most favored horseman, *Holocaust*! By *Scott Lobdell* and *Joe Madureira*!

X-MAN #2: Tracked by Domino and her hunters, Essex leads X-Man and Co. to a 'genetic factory' and into the hands of Apocalypse's zealous followers, the *Madri*! Plus, Essex's secret is discovered, and someone pays for it with their life! By *Jeph Loeb* and *Steve Skroce*!

GENERATION NEXT #2: The next generation of X-Men descend into the darkest depths of Apocalypse's slave pens as the search for *Ilyana Rasputin* continues! Plus, the introduction of the 'sweetest' villain of all...the *Sugar Man*! By *Scott Lobdell* and *Chris Bachalo*!

WEAPON X #2: Helping the human evacuation of North America, Logan and Jean discover ideological differences that threaten to tear the happy couple apart! Will they reconcile their differences before *Pierce* and his gene-technologically augmented humans sabotage the entire operation? By *Larry Hama* and *Adam Kubert*!

X-CALIBRE #2: Ignorant to the fact he's being tailed by *Damask* and the *Pale Riders*, *Nightcrawler* embarks on a perilous sea voyage in search of the mythic *Avallon*! But if the *Madri* continue to destroy the *Infernal Gallop*, he may never arrive! By *Warren Ellis* and *Roger Cruz*!

AMAZING X-MEN #2: Seeking to aid the Sentinels' evacuation of the human population, the X-Men risk their lives to prevent any further genocide and end up going toe-to-toe with some of Apocalypse's fearsome enforcers, the evil *Brotherhood*! Plus, the malevolence of the mischievous *Abyss*! By *Fabian Nicieza* and *Andy Kubert*!

FACTOR X #2: There's trouble in the mutant hierarchy as *Sinister* continues to elude Apocalypse's forces. Tensions between the Summers brothers mount even further when *Havok* discovers who is responsible for freeing the slaves from the pens! By *John Francis Moore* and *Steve Epting*!

GAMBIT & THE X-TERNAIS #2: Slingshot to the other side of the galaxy by *Lila Cheney*'s newfound mutant powers, the X-Ternals go where no mutant has ever dared go before...into the heart of the *Sh'iar Imperium*! Will they steal the *M'Kraan Crystal* from the mad Emperor *D'Ken*, or get pinched by that interstellar band of freebooters known as the *Starjammers*?! By *Fabian Nicieza* and *Tony Daniel*!

COVER SHOWCASE

THE ASTONISHING



ART BY
JOE MADUREIRA
& TIM
TOWNSEND

